



The Express



Second Quarter

June 2016

Dates to Remember:

- 6/6 D-Day
- 6/14 Flag Day
- 6/16 Father's Day
- 6/20 First Day of Summer
- 7/1 New Budget Year
- 7/4 Independence Day
- 7/24 Parents Day
- 8/3 First Day of School for Aztec
- 8/19 Aviation Day
- 8/26 Women's Equality Day

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Judge John Nelson Closes Out His Judicial Career

The Honorable John N. Nelson brought his 42-year legal and judicial career to an end on March 25, but it is clear that he will continue to carry the employees of the juvenile court in his heart.

While we will always associate Judge Nelson with the juvenile court, that was not where he started. Following his graduation from law school in 1973, Judge Nelson spent three years as a deputy county attorney and then 21 years in private practice.

In January of 1998, Nelson was appointed to the Superior Court bench. In 2005, he was appointed the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court, replacing the Honorable Kirby Kongable.

While we may be somewhat biased, it would appear that Judge Nelson really found his calling at the juvenile court, which

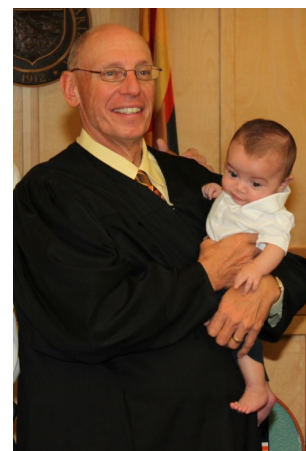
reached high levels of professionalism and fairness with him on the bench.

The fledgling Juvenile Drug Court program really took off, reaching a size that it has not come near to matching in recent years. Yuma County's program was consistently the most successful in the state, with a graduation rate 20 to 30 percent higher than the next in line.

In addition, Judge Nelson was responsible for Yuma's inaugural celebration of National Adoption Day in 2009. This event, which brings the community and the court in a positive way to recognize the plight of children in foster care, will be celebrating its eighth year in Yuma in November.

But, best of all were the pancake breakfasts that he presided over. Judge Nelson made the best pancakes in town.

While we had hoped that Judge Nelson would spend the rest of his career at the juvenile court, he was called back to the Superior Court in 2011 to



Adoption Day

take over as the presiding judge.

During a luncheon held in his honor at the juvenile court on March 11, which was attended by his wife, Alice, it was apparent that Judge Nelson's time at the juvenile court had a huge impact on him, just as he had on the staff.

In an exchange that was as emotional as it was humorous, Judge Nelson and staff reminisced and exchanged stories. Director Tim Hardy also presented the judge with a clock to commemorate his time with us.

Whatever Judge Nelson does with his retirement years—traveling, spending time with his family or just lots of fishing—he will always be a part of the incredible legacy of the Yuma County Juvenile Court.



Nelson receives his clock from Tim Hardy

Judge Keddie Doesn't See Big Increase in Crimes Committed by Juveniles Here

From the March 8, 1985 issue of the Yuma Daily Sun

A judge said Thursday he hasn't noticed any large increase in crime committed by juveniles.

Speaking at a Governmental Affairs Forum, Yuma County Superior Court Judge Douglas Keddie said, "There isn't any startling increase in juvenile crime." Instead, Keddie said juvenile crime is increasing at about the same rate as the population growth.

Keddie said he bases his ideas on what he has noticed as a judge who handles juvenile cases as well as talking with knowledgeable people.

He said last year, 2,913 cases were handled by the local juvenile court system. Of those, 1,310 cases involved juveniles who were considered delinquent, a term used for those who commit crimes. Adults committing the same crimes would be charged with misdemeanors or felonies.

Another 821 cases involved juveniles who are considered in-

corrigible, which means they can't be controlled by their parents. Incorrigibility applies only to juveniles. There is no comparable category in the adult criminal justice system.

The other 782 cases involved traffic offenses.

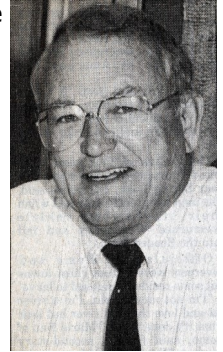
Keddie said most of the delinquent juvenile commit crimes against property such as thefts and burglaries. A prevalent crime among juveniles is bicycle theft, according to Keddie.

He said young thieves have operations similar to car "chop shops." After the bicycle is stolen, the thief dismantles it and sells the parts instead of the entire bicycle.

Keddie recommended parents question their children when they acquire new or expensive bicycle parts for a cheap price. He said if the children got a good deal, there is probably something wrong with it.

Keddie also said he is in favor of assigning juvenile offenders to work details on weekends as one form of punishment. In the

VOICES FROM THE PAST



Judge Keddie

work details, the youths do community service work such as clearing the cemetery, cleaning the outside of the courthouse and helping out at the library. Studies have shown that juveniles in such programs have recidivism (rearrest) rate of 10 percent, compared to 25 percent without the program.

Commenting on the financial aspects, Keddie said the local juvenile court system had a budget of more than \$534,000 last year, but still ran out of money for foster care.

Restitution paid by the offenders to victims totaled \$7,246 and fines amounted to \$11,186.

Keddie also said the Yuma County Juvenile Detention Facility is one of the best around. He said the facility consistently gets good ratings.

Juvenile Home is Commended

From the February 5, 1961 issue of the Yuma Daily Sun

Editor, The Sun:

Two and one-half years ago, the Colo-Gila Kiwanas Club of Yuma sponsored the establishment of the Juvenile Detention Home for Yuma County. Prior to that time, because of a lack of facilities, all teenage offenders had been placed in the County Jail.

Last week, James Daly, chief probation officer for Yuma County, presented a program to our club. It included a report on the Juvenile Detention Home and a tour, by our entire club, through the Home.

We were all impressed by the outstanding job done by Mr. Daly in the organizing and supervision of this public institution. We would also like to commend the work of the present couple that

run the home, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Moore.

As a service club, we are proud to have had a part in the establishment of this worthwhile addition to our growing community. We wish to acknowledge the talented efforts by James Daly. Certainly, he is one of Yuma County's dedicated officials.

RAY DIXON
Vice Pres., Colo-Gila
Kiwanas Club of Yuma

Miguel Saldana Retires...Or Does, He?

When Miguel Saldana retired on March 31, we thought for sure that it was going to be the end of an era. Miguel was one of the truly nice guys and was going to be missed.

At his retirement luncheon on April 1, it became clear that what was going to be missed was Miguel's uncanny sense of direction.

In a series of testimonials, officer after officer verified that Miguel's directions seldom involved house numbers of street names, and were invariably wrong. It was also suggested that Miguel's ancient GPS unit be put in the Juvenile Court museum.

Miguel was originally hired by the Juvenile Court in August of 1999 as a Community Service Specialist.



Miguel Saldana

After serving more than two years in that position, he was promoted in February of 2002 to surveillance officer in the Juvenile Intensive Probation Supervision (JIPS) program.

After two years as an SO, Miguel took a year off, returning to the same position in June 23, 2005.

For the past 11 years, has served in the JIPS program, including a stint with the very difficult sex offender caseload and also as a first aid and CPR instructor.

But, that only tells part of the story. In addition to raising their own family, Miguel and his wife were also foster parents. In fact, Miguel went so far as to adopt four siblings who were being fostered in his home to keep them from being separated.

And, if that wasn't enough to demonstrate his quality as a person,



Tim Hardy present plaque to Miguel

Miguel retired, not because he was tired of working, but to better care for his ailing mother.

Emphasizing his role as a treasure hunter in both his professional and personal lives, Miguel was going to be very hard to replace. But, on July 5, Miguel will be returning to his Juvenile Court family on July 5, starting a second career as a Probation Aide. Good news, indeed.

Juvenile Court Employees Participate in Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics

Along with over 100 runners from various federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, 12 intrepid employees of the Yuma County Juvenile Court participated in the Arizona Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics on May 4.

Yuma was assigned the fifth leg of the relay, in which officers and athletes carried the torch, known as

the "Flame of Hope," over a 22-mile course, starting at the border in San Luis, Arizona and ending at the Yuma Quartermaster Depot. Each agency covered a portion of that distance, walking, running and bicycling as far as they were able to go.



Runners pass by the juvenile center

Following a reception at the Quartermaster Depot, the Flame of Hope continued on its way to Glendale, Arizona, where it was used to light the flame at the Special Olympics Arizona Summer Games, which were held at Raymond S. Kellis High School May 5-7.



Guillermo Gaton, Africa Carrasco, Brenda Smith, Imelda Arellano, Edna Lugo, Johanna Lavarias, Molly Kelly, Diana Sanchez, Cesar Figueroa, Juan Linarez and Maria Martinez

Each year, nearly 100,000 law enforcement officers from over 35 countries from around the globe participate in this event, which has raised more than \$500 million for Special Olympics since its inception in 1981.

Kenny Dobbs Slam Dunks His Inspiring Message of Hope

As part of the Juvenile Court's effort to make Yuma a Kids at Hope community, Rick Miller, CEO of Kids at Hope, came back to Yuma on April 11 to reinforce his message of connecting with kids and empowering them to succeed,

This time, though, he brought slam dunk champion Kenny Dobbs with him. Dobbs had been in Yuma a few months before, speaking and performing at Aztec High School.

This time, however, the Kids at Hope committee worked hard to set up separate performances at two local schools; Somerton Middle School and Castle Dome Middle School.

Following introductions by Presiding Juvenile Judge Mark



Kenny Dobbs

Wayne Reeves, Director Tim Hardy and Miller, Dobbs gave an inspiring message of hope to more than 300 sixth graders in Somerton. A Native American member of the Choctaw Nation, Dobbs grew up in Phoenix, surrounded by gang violence and drugs. Narrowly avoiding a prison sentence as a young adult, Dobbs turned his life around by concentrating on something that he

had been doing most of his life, playing basketball and dunking the basketball.

Along with a brief stint in the NBA, Dobbs developed his dunking skills and won several major slam dunk competitions.



He is now known worldwide as the "slam dunk king" and has taught a number of NBA players how to dunk the basketball.

Dobbs has also become a popular motivational speaker, traveling around the world to deliver his message of overcoming obstacles and achieving goals.

Following his presentation, Dobbs had the school's best basketball players come onto the court for a game of two on two.

But, he saved the best for last, as he had the crowd roaring as he soared over students, teachers and administrators, alike, to dunk the basketball in spectacular fashion.



Then, he sat patiently and autographed his comic book, *The Time Traveler*, for every student in the gym, interacting with them the entire time.

This entire scenario was repeated a couple hours later to a group of eighth graders at Castle Dome. The enthusiasm of the students was infectious and the experience was something that they will not forget for some time to come.



Kids at Hope Committee with Rick Milller and Kenny Dobbs

Just the Facts - Did You Know That...

Did you know... that the Juvenile Court has over 20 employees whose family members and/or relatives celebrated graduations in May of 2016? These ranged from pre-school and kindergarten all the way through high school, college and trade school.

Please join me in honoring the Juvenile Court Family's 2016 Graduating Class. These graduates are:

- ◇ **Elizabeth Acosta:** Delilah Acosta (Daughter) graduated from Kindergarten at Yuma Lutheran School
- ◇ **Imelda Arellano:** Nadia Arellano (Sister) graduated from Arizona State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing
- ◇ **Ranee Arviso:** Devina Ayala (Niece) graduated from EOC Charter High School
- ◇ **Ranee Arviso:** Caroline Martinez (Niece) graduated from Fourth Avenue Junior High School
- ◇ **Stephanie Buthmann:** Marissa Acosta (Daughter) graduated from Yuma School of Beauty
- ◇ **Africa Carrasco:** Clarissa Carrasco (Daughter) graduated from Kofa High School
- ◇ **Sunni Espinoza:** Kaleen Espinoza (Daughter) graduated from Kindergarten at Yuma Lutheran School
- ◇ **Sunni Espinoza:** Keegan Quintana Espinoza (Daughter) graduated from Gila Ridge High School

◇ **Autumn Ferguson:** Jordan Ferguson (Son) graduated from Yuma High School

◇ **Dawn Blake:** Alina Freeman (Granddaughter) graduated from Kindergarten at Palmcroft Elementary School

◇ **Ignacio Galindo:** Carlos Galindo (Son) graduated from Woodard Junior High School

◇ **Belinda Gill:** Blanca Nolasco (Daughter) graduated from Centennial Middle School

◇ **Karen Hamby:** Kaya Nadia Hauser (Granddaughter) graduated from Kindergarten at James B. Rolle School

◇ **Jolene Hefner:** Cameron Hefner (Son) graduated from the University of Arizona with a Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U. S. Air Force

◇ **Patricia Hernandez:** Melesio Hernandez, Jr. (Son) graduated from the University of Arizona with a Bachelor's Degree in Systems Engineering



◇ **Molly Kelly:** Luke Kelly (Grandson) graduated from Woodard Junior High School

◇ **Gena Kramer:** Justin Nickelson (Son) graduated from Gila Ridge High School



◇ **Joanna Lavarias:** Aleia Lavarias (Daughter) graduated from Cornerstone Preschool

◇ **Leo Mendez:** Alyssa Ruiz (Niece) graduated from Corona de Sol High School

◇ **Raul Mesa:** Jordan Mesa (Son) graduated from Kindergarten

◇ **Emmie Roman:** Angela Marie "Angie" Roman (Daughter) graduated from Arizona Western College with an Associate's Degree in Family Studies

◇ **Ben Rowe:** Tiana Deloney (Niece) graduated from Woodard Junior High School

◇ **Ben Rowe:** Nicholas Munoz (Nephew) graduated from Kofa High School

◇ **Diana Sanchez:** Gabriel R. Sanchez (Son) graduated from Kindergarten at St. Francis of Assisi School



Successful Futures Launches

By: Teresa Lopez

After months of brainstorming and planning, we are excited to announce, that on April 19 the Yuma County Juvenile Court launched its Pilot Program for Track 2 of Success Court, known as Successful Futures.

The program was created to target low-risk, high needs youth, ranging in age from 15 to 17 years. This track is an education based program that will provide participants with skills to be successful at all four destinations of Kid's at Hope: Home and Family, Education and Career, Hobbies and Recreation, and Community and Service.

Since the start of the program, the participants have attended classes, where they have been given the opportunity to learn

about Self-Care, Substance Abuse and Addiction, and Coping Skills and Self-Esteem. So far, the participants appear to be really enjoying the curriculum, as evidenced by a 100% attendance rate over the past month.

One participant stated, "When my mom told me that I would have to attend these classes I was very upset. Now, I look forward to Thursdays because I know I get to go to Success Court."

Next month, the participants will begin having their status review hearings, which will give them the opportunity to appear in front of the Honorable Judge Reeves and present him with the information that they are learning in Success Court.

Over the next couple of months, the youth and the Success Court team are looking forward to welcoming a number of guest speakers, such as Maribel Saenz from The Healing Journey; Armando Pena, a personal trainer and chef; and Alejandro the Magnificent from 3G Catering.

Our first field trip is scheduled on July 21 to the Arizona Culinary Institute, where we will be touring the school, receiving admissions information on and possibly having a three course dining experience at the school's restaurant.

The Success Court team is elated to see the enthusiasm and level of engagement of our participants and looks forward to their growth and progress within the group and as individuals.

New Signs at the Juvenile Justice Center



Aging to Perfection

Yolanda Huerta June 2
Molly Kelly June 2
Dennis Sorenson June 3
Jolene Hefner June 6
Lora De Leon June 12
Billy Hochheimer June 20
Melanie Richardson June 21
Hector Gonzalez June 22
Johanna Calderon June 23
Ranee Arviso June 25
Lisa Luchtman June 25
Alexis Urtuzuastegui June 26

Steven Banelos June 28
Matt Fox June 29
Juan Linarez July 3
Alex Godinez July 4
Gabriela Lachica July 6
Ariel Acosta July 10
Frederic Muntinga July 12
Suman Pangasa July 14

Dawn Blake July 18
Charlie Santa Cruz July 20
Josaphat Briones July 26
David Sherman July 27
Karen Hamby July 30
Anet Solorzano Aug 1
Edna Lugo Aug 10
Debra Ullery Aug 12
Kathleen Barron Aug 14
Yvonne Graf Aug 21
Alexander Castillo Aug 21
Evander Johnson Aug 24



Sherri Justice Recognized by Optimist Club

Already recognized as the juvenile court's Probation Officer of the Year for 2015, Sherri Justice was honored again on May 25 during a breakfast meeting of the Sunrise Optimist Club of Yuma.

The Optimists have been giving out awards each year since 1965 as part of their Respect for Law Day, a national observance sponsored by Optimist International to honor law enforcement officers and fire fighters.

The award is given for "exhibiting individual respect for law and for fulfilling personal obligations to fellow citizens and to the community," and is intended to inspire respect for the law among the youth.

Sherri has been with the department for more than 25 years and is currently a Probation Officer II assigned to the department's Change Begins With Me Program in Community Restitution.

Sherri is a strong facilitator and mentor in the motivational interviewing process. In her current assignment, she has built relationships with the community and has enabled a number of juveniles in the program to get jobs.

Sherri will also be recognized in September at the Statewide Probation Awards and Recognition luncheon in Mesa, where she is our court's nominee for the Arizona State Line Officer of the Year.



Sherri Justice, Supervisor Mike Eslinger and Optimist Peggy Eskew

Sherri is a hard worker and her enthusiasm, perseverance and concern for helping the youth with whom she works makes him an outstanding example of what it means to be an employee of the Yuma County Juvenile Court.

Edna Lugo Honored for Work With Victims of Juvenile Sex Trafficking

Edna Lugo has held many positions in more than 13 years with the juvenile court, but it is her recent work with sex trafficked youth that has allowed her to put her empathy, communication skills and perseverance to their best uses.



Edna Lugo

In 2014, the State of Arizona changed its laws to strengthen penalties against human and sex traffickers and to enhance protective measures for its victims.

The Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family recently put together the *Arizona Guidelines for Developing a Regional Response to Youth Sex Trafficking*, which was intended to provide a comprehensive approach to dealing with this very difficult issue. One primary focus was to begin treating young girls involved in the sex trade as victims, rather than criminals.

As part of this, each county juvenile probation department was to designate a sex trafficking specialist who would receive in depth training and would act as the department's liaison with the Arizona Supreme Court.

Edna was chosen for that role and has been attending extensive training over the past year. Not only has she proven to be a valuable source of information for the department, she has also put her new knowledge to amazing use.

A few months ago, Edna suspected that two teenage girls in detention were victims of sex trafficking. Enlisting the assistance of the local FBI office and the Yuma Police Department, Edna was able to verify her suspicions.

Edna was able to accomplish this breakthrough by participating in interviews, going on ride-alongs with law

enforcement to verify locations, coordinating treatment services and providing support to the two girls going through the very difficult investigative process.

For her efforts, Edna was recognized on May 16 by Tim Hardy, who presented her with the Director's Award. In the citation, her supervisor, Imelda Arellano, stated that in Edna's efforts with these two young victims, "she as been a great example of what a probation officer can and should be."



Edna receives commendation from Tim Hardy

Vice Chief Justice Addresses Aztec High School Graduation

Aztec High School celebrated its spring graduation on May 26, 2016 at the Yuma Catholic High School gymnasium. This ceremony had added significance, as it also recognized Aztec's 20th year of existence as the only charter school of its kind in the state, if not the nation.

In addition to a full house of family and friends, the event featured keynote speaker John Pelander, the Vice Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court, who challenged the 22 graduates to "set audacious goals and to pursue them with gusto."



John Pelander

Other speakers were David K. Byers, the Administrative Director of the Arizona Supreme Court and Tim D. Hardy, the Superintendent of Aztec and Director of the Yuma County Juvenile Court.

Also in attendance were the Hons. Mark Wayne Reeves, Kathryn

Stocking-Tate, Maria Elena Cruz, Larry Kenworthy and Roger Nelson, along with County Administrator Susan Thorpe.

Completing the requirements for graduation were Ashley Amaro, Anai Aparicio, Manuel Ayon, Leslie Bastidas, Grace Beal, Martin Beltran, Arham Candela, Oscar Casillas, Aaron Castillo, Jose Flores, Romeo Gaxiola, Angelica Guerrero, Octavio Herrera-Diaz, Francisco Juarez, Marco Lara, Adolfo Membrano, Melissa Meza, Alexis Miller, Gerardo Montoya, Danitza Morgan, Ivan Munoz and Linda Sanchez.

In addition, several students received special recognition. Aparicio was given the Principal's Award for her overall body of work, Casillas was presented with the Kids at Hope Award and Morgan received the Counselor's Award for time traveling to her college and career aspirations.



After a senior farewell from the yearbook staff and an excellent speech on citizenship from Julia Arizona, the students received their diplomas. Retiring Principal Molly Kelly was unable to attend because of a family emergency.

We are so proud of our "Kids at Hope" graduates. They exemplify the best of our school and our community.



Incoming Principal Steve Pallack addresses the graduates

Numbers That Matter

By: Jennifer Rader

Probation Fees Collected

	February	March	April
Standard	\$ 4,825.00	\$ 6,512.00	\$ 4,175.00
JIPS	\$ 5,438.00	\$ 2,261.00	\$ 3,260.00
Diversion	\$ 1,770.00	\$ 2,160.00	\$ 1,370.00
Collections	\$ 235.00	\$ 6,674.66	\$ 4,013.73
Off Probation	\$ 875.00	\$ 2,072.00	\$ 392.00
Total	\$13,143.00	\$19,679.66	\$13,210.73

Restitution Collected

February	March	April
\$ 1,203.62	\$ 381.91	\$ 158.45
\$ 713.83	\$ 1,320.00	\$ 165.33
\$ 0.00	\$ 39.50	\$ 79.65
\$ 487.00	\$ 4,252.25	\$ 2,873.20
\$ 640.31	\$ 308.49	\$ 395.36
\$3,044.76	\$6,302.15	\$3,671.99

New Hires



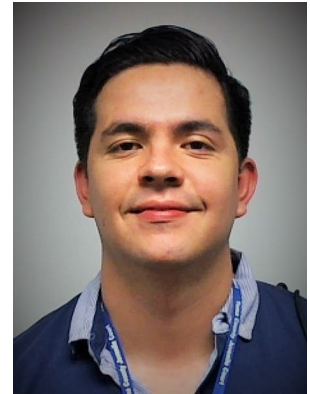
Michael Bell
Dispatcher
March 15



Rosalba Gomez
Detention Officer I
March 21



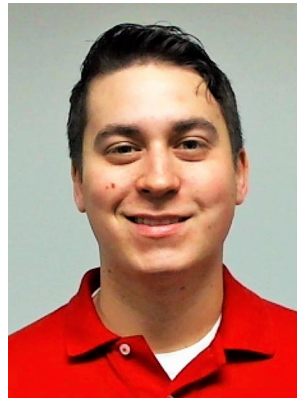
Josaphat Briones
Detention Officer Trainee
April 4



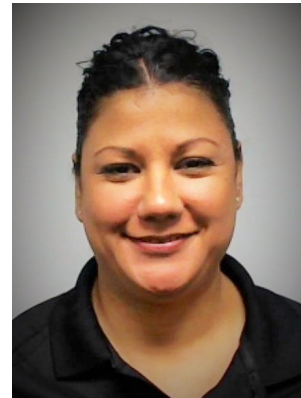
Mario Guerrero-Lamas
Detention Officer I
April 11



Johanna Calderon
Financial Services
Supervisor
April 25



Evander Johnson
Detention Officer Trainee
April 25



Maria Perez
Detention Officer I
April 25



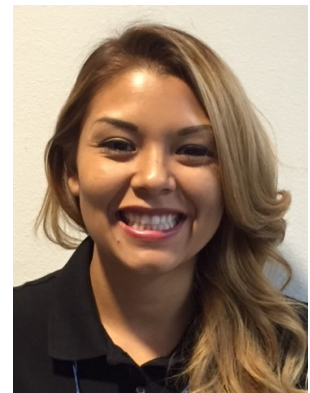
Orlando Cuen
Detention Officer Trainee
May 2



Gary Maxwell
Volunteer
May 6



Karen Ridgers
Teacher
Aztec High School
June 6



Claudia Rivas
Detention Officer Trainee
June 6

Promotions/Transfers



Theresa Figmaka
Detention Officer II
March 20



Zachary Harrison
Surveillance Officer
March 23



Philip Aitken
Surveillance Officer
April 25



Steve Pallack
Principal
Aztec High School
April 25

Change Begins With Me Program Builds Garden Boxes for Senior Center

Change Begins With Me (CBWM), which is a part of the Community Restitution program designed specifically for older youth, completed a project over the past couple of months, designed specifically to help senior citizens in Somerton.

Last year, participants in CBWM had constructed and installed garden boxes for John's Garden, on site at the juvenile justice center. The boxes were designed by Gene Ingersoll, a master gardener with Yuma County.

This year, CBWM was asked to help with an upgrade to a community garden at Valle del Desierto, a senior housing project in Somerton. This is an assisted living complex made up of 45 on-bedroom units.

Tricia Kinnell, a nutritionist with the County Health Department, and also a master gardener, got a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to pay for the project and Ingersoll, once again, drew up the plans for the raised garden beds.

Ten CBWM participants; along Juve-

nile Court staff Mike Eslinger, Sherri Justice, Guillermo Gatón, Christina Charles and Hector Gonzalez; spent a couple of week building nine boxes at the juvenile justice center before installing them in Somerton.

Residents at Valle del Desierto helped with transplants and planting of seeds to get the garden going. Vegetables grown in the garden will be used this year in nutrition programs taught by the Health Department.

CBWM has been in operation for the past two years. It is designed to teach the participants job skills with the help of community partnerships.

There is also a big emphasis on relationship building and developing socialization skills, with the ultimate goal of helping these youth to become the best version of themselves.



Installation of completed garden boxes



Finished product after planting

First Quarter Awards



Africa Carrasco

**Administrative Assistant
Aztec High School
Employee of the Quarter**

A fellow employee commented, "Since Africa started at Aztec, she has been an amazing addition to the department. She has amazing patience and offers excellent service to parents and community members who come into the office."

They say people can't actually multi-task, but I don't think Africa received that memo. She not only handles phone calls, student grades, late passes and teacher requests, but everything else that is thrown at her with a wonderful sense of humor.

She is one of the best employees that I have had the pleasure to work with in my career. She is well deserving of this honor."

Africa has been an administrative assistant at Aztec High School since 2014. She is also a member of the San Luis City Council and of the Board of Trustees for the Yuma County Library District.



Jose Hernandez

**Detention Officer
of the Quarter**

A fellow employee commented, "He is a team player and seen as a silent leader among his coworkers. Jose is an officer who appears to accept that learning is a career long process."

Jose is often seen researching policy and providing junior officers with information regarding policy and procedure. He explains the "right" way to do things and not the popular or "easy" way. Jose is regularly available to help others and since he does not procrastinate with his own work, he is available.

When working with children, Jose creates an environment where he can time travel with children and provides the family with the best service he can. Jose demonstrates what a Detention Officer I should be and is valuable employee."

Jose has been a detention officer since 2000. Known by his coworkers as "Mick," Jose is known for doing everything by the book.



Melanie Richardson

**Probation Officer
of the Quarter**

A fellow employee commented, "During the last few months, Melanie has taken on some duties that have improved the quality of service provided to families."

Melanie has facilitated Successful Parenting classes and activities with youth. She has even taken this a step further and took the lead in a workgroup for Successful Parenting. Melanie provided leadership in coordinating efforts to offer these classes to both probation families and foster families in the community.

Melanie is very aware of the needs of these families and has taken the initiative to make a difference in their lives."

Hired as a Courtroom Clerk in 2001, Melanie has spent the past 14 years as a Probation Officer I in standard probation, most recently with Drug Court. In addition to Successful parenting, Melanie also facilitates Parent Orientation and the Girl's Empowerment Meeting (GEM).

The staff of The Blog is looking for your suggestions on ways to improve the content of the newsletter, as well as ideas for upcoming issues. If you have any ideas or would like to submit a story, contact Leo Mendez at lmendez@courts.az.gov or Ben Rowe at browe@courts.az.gov, or any member of the newsletter committee.

